

River Valley CRP (CITIZENS REVIEW PANEL)

Meeting Minutes

Date: 4/24/14

Location: South Georgia Technical College
Cordele Campus, 402 North Midway Rd
10:00 a.m.

Panel Present: Jerry Carney, G. Sanders Griffith III, Buddy Leger, Frank Myers

Agenda: Presentation of Benefits Review Report along with Question & Answers

1st meeting of CRP 2014

Chairman Carney called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. with first order of business being presentation and approval of the minutes from the December 11, 2013 meeting. Motion was made by Frank Myers and seconded by Buddy Leger to accept and approve said minutes.

Chairman Carney stated this is the fourth meeting of the Citizen's Review Panel and recognized Mike Dover, DOT.

Mike Dover introduced other DOT staff present and updated the Panel as follows:

1. DOT recognized from the beginning that local government receipt of the 25% share of TIA receipts was to be foundational to passage of the regional referenda. Although collections in all three regions are below projected levels, River Valley is faring better than the others. Monthly flow of this revenue from retailers through GSFIC to the local governments continues to be very fluid.
2. Local governments can apply to DOT to administer Investment List (Regional) projects located within their jurisdictions. One hundred thirty such applications have been processed and Mr. Dover described this coordination with local governments as very helpful to the department.
3. To date, DOT has let 47 Regional projects, contracted over \$230 million, which exceeds the current collection level, and paid out over \$14 million. The region's largest Band 1 project is the +\$30 million widening/extension of U.S. 27 in Randolph County; scheduled completion date summer 2016.
4. In keeping with department policy to promote contract participation by minority-owned, women-owned and veteran-owned business, and small business in general, DOT has already hosted formal outreach meetings in Augusta and Macon and is planning one in Columbus this summer.

5. The department is designing a survey targeted to local governments to identify the kinds of projects local governments are constructing with discretionary revenues, and to measure the department's customer performance among local governments.
6. The department's March approval of Montezuma's request to move its ±\$200K project from Band 1 to Band 3 was the first and only Band change to date. The process worked very smoothly and exactly as planned.
7. The TIA Manual for contractors and consultants is being revised.
8. A call for delivery of Band 2 Regional projects will be issued soon.

DOT is placing TIA signage on all Regional projects and the department strongly encourages their use on all discretionary projects. While the same logo is used in all three regions each region has its unique identifier, and they can be customized by local jurisdiction. Georgia Correctional Industries (GCI) has the template; \$46/sign.

Chairman Carney lamented that fact there is no signage on the local project sites identifying them as TIA-funded. The brief discussion that followed echoed the earlier statement that the strength of the successful referendum was the provision of funding for local governments to construct local projects, and that it is critical residents see these funds at work. The GCI contact was provided to facilitate orders for local signage. A comment was made that local governments need to be reminded about the importance of posting appropriate signage.

Kelvin Mullins, DOT, reporting on the status of other River Valley Band 1 projects (US 27 mentioned above) stated DOT had approved Columbus' proposal to deliver the community's four Band 1 projects.

1. Construction on Columbus' two most advanced projects, South Lumpkin Road Multi-Use Facility and the U.S. 27/Custer Rd Interchange, is scheduled to begin by the end of 2014/early 2015,
2. Pobiddy Road in Talbot County is scheduled to be let for construction September this year,
3. Locations of four passing lanes on U.S. 41 in Dooly County have been approved; construction is anticipated to begin in fall 2015,
4. Randolph County's railroad bridge replacement is under construction and scheduled for completion in May 2016,
5. The design for improvements of South Georgia Tech Parkway in Americus/Sumter County is nearing completion.

The department will soon be inviting applications for administration/delivery of Band 2 projects and has already initiated pre-planning activities related to Band 3.

Chairman Carney asked for clarification on the timing of collections. Mike Dover responded vendors have until the 23rd of every month to report collections for the previous month. The Department of Revenue performs a quick audit of the reports and by the end of the month notifies DOT of the collections in place. Because collections can vary so significantly from month-to-month, more attention is paid to yearly totals for trend analyses.

Anthony Sanger, GDOT TIA Program Manager, stated that the effect that lower than forecasted tax collection levels have on project implementation is countered somewhat by a decision to build the projects using the Approved Investment List budget values (2011 dollars). Inflation has been slightly lower than the rate used in the ten-year projection model. This is of some help in efforts to deliver projects and meeting stated benefits. The State Economist used a 2% inflation rate in the projection model when originally forecasting revenues; it is currently ranging between approximately 1.7% and 2.9% depending upon the source cited. Mike Dover added that this factor, in conjunction with careful project planning, design and construction budget management will help the department meet the projects' stated benefit which is the focus of TIA 2010, not just the scope of projects.

Frank Myers, noting the severe variations in collections between the three regions, asked if there are any longer term trends that can be gleaned from the data. Anthony Sanger, DOT, responded that while the current trend is not good, the data suggests the longer trend remains somewhat flat at the current level.

Mike Dover stated that DOT had approved Columbus' bid to administer/deliver their Investment List projects and introduced Rick Jones, Columbus Planning Director, to present a status report.

Rick Jones stated Columbus has eight projects on the Investment List totaling a projected \$218 million. He described the status of all four projects in Band 1.

1. River Walk has been under development for twenty years, expect to begin construction of current phase around the turn of the year 2014/2015.
2. Express Bus Park-N-Ride will completely revamp current routes. Consultant is on board and the route study with recommendations is expected by July.
3. South Lumpkin Road Multi-Use Facility, construction is expected to begin by the end of 2014
4. US 27/Custer Road Interchange is currently under design

The city is already looking into the three Band 2 projects.

In closing Rick stated the city council had established criteria for expenditure of discretionary funds which will be used on a pay-as-you-go basis. Although none of these funds have been expended to date, they would be applied to projects this year.

Frank Myers expressed concern that Columbus was not already using the discretionary funds to address obvious needs.

Chairman Carney expressed concern that his home community was not “selling” the TIA program by posting appropriate signage on discretionary-funded construction sites.

In response to the chairman’s invitation for comments from other Panel members, then guests, guests from Sumter County identified their discretionary activities and stressed their use of signage identifying TIA-funded projects.

Chairman Carney announced tentative plans to convene the next meeting of the Panel in Americus the last week of August or the week of Labor Day, and the third meeting of the year the first week of December.

After a motion and second, the chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:14 a.m.

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